

Chaplain J. M. Robinson  
S. C. C. A. E. F.

Soldier's Mail



Mrs. Stewart M. Robinson,  
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U. S. A.

O.K.  
J. M. Robinson  
Chaplain

February 4, 1919.  
Bonguenais, Loire-Inf.

Dearest Sweetheart,

Still in this fair country and getting rather tired of it too. Yesterday General Pershing came to town and we all went down to the station and were reviewed by him. He was inspecting all the area. The rest of the troops in this neighborhood were inspected in their quarters, but because we were so well drilled and about the most military bunch about we were picked to go down and act as escort for J. J. It was rather a diversion. He said we were all right. Now we wonder if his good word will put us on the boat a few days earlier. There does not seem to be any reason why we are spending so long a time here. We have been accusing the colonel of the delay but I don't know whether he is to blame or not. We will not press



the point till we are well out of the service. Then he wants to be good. But then there will be so much wool flying that our little party will not show up very conspicuously. All the mail has been held up in New York it seems because we have been scheduled to be in the States since before Christmas. This has added to the discontent of the men. While the war was on delays in the mail were not noticed. My mail came along with wonderful regularity thanks to your faithfulness. Now I suspect you stopped writing when my cables went to you. Probably, however, you resumed afterwards. I have not had one just lately. If the address you put on the letter is anything else than 53 Artillery it will come on through. The Colonel was sly enough to have his mail sent to him here at Nantes with the A.P.O. 767 added and with no mention of the organization with the result that



he received a letter written on January 16<sup>th</sup> in the States. This came in fine time and I envy the old cuss having received it.

This has been a funny stay here with every day thinking we were likely to go and never going. I have been trying to carry on the work as best I can but it is pretty unsatisfactory because there is no permanent interest. Everybody expects to go and if you suggest anything like a class or regular meeting at stated intervals everybody interprets it as being a sign of staying here indefinitely and immediately the gloom settles down on the bunch.

Had a nice letter from Sis the other day. It had been sent to the 28<sup>th</sup> and must have been pretty old. There was no date on it and so I do not know when exactly it started. She was evidently in a mood to be glad to see anybody from home and I wish I could get over to



her but it is hardly possible now.  
I did not go down to Montauban either.  
Sean Soumergue sent me a nice letter  
and set a day but I finally telegraphed  
him that I could not come. As it turned  
out I could have gone down and back a  
dozen times. But I decided that the boat  
might come for us and besides I doubt if  
seeing him would do me any particular good.  
It would have probably involved saying  
definitely what I intended to do about  
coming and I don't want to say just  
yet. We'll look over all the prospects  
in the U.S. first.

A letter came along from Miss Paul  
at Bourbonne-les-Bains. She is the  
English speaking lady there who used  
to be a companion for some of Dr. Weir  
Mitchell's family. I put a note in  
the letter to the lace lady so that if  
she could not understand my French  
she could call on Miss Paul to help  
her out with my English note to



Miss Paul. It seems there will never be another such tea cover as that first one I sent because the person who designed it lived in Nancy and went and died. But the lace lady said she would try to make another that would be just as acceptable and would please you. Miss Paul was very anxious to know how the little dress fitted! but I did not enlighten her in any way. We'll keep that same bit of juvenile trossseau!

There is almost nothing to do here. We play five hundred & keep from wilting down under the tedium. We explode here over the delay and settle all the troubles of the regiment. We have started a few good moves. We got our inspection hurried up a bit. If we were sure the Colonel was sincere in his desire to go home it would not be so bad, but he is here a colonel drawing oversea pay in comfortable

quarters. All he has home is a wife from whom he has been away a good deal. His goods are all stored in a fort and he being Scotch is quite keen on getting in the good dollars. He was crazy to get his second service stripe and we have stayed long enough now so he is wearing it now. We thought this was the last thing we had to do but maybe we have yet to satisfy some further cravings for the old man.

Well we will be with you D.C!  
before long. It will not be many  
days.

Mcveyor  
Stewart.



Soldier's Mail

Wm. M. Robinson

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O.K.

Stewart M.  
Robinson  
Captain



Bouguenais  
February 9 1919

Dearest -

Still here but now we have definite word to prepare to leave and ought to be at Spaing by next Sunday, then in about a week more we ought to be on a boat and in yet another week somewhere in the U.S. But when that happens you will be getting little missives over the wire that will enable you to get to me easily.

Last week I had a two day stay in Paris and it was a unique experience. You will never believe all that happened to me. I will only give a little outline to start your imagination working. But on Friday evening February 7 I wrote from verbal dictation on a typewriter the first written copy of the Official Communiqué of the session of the Peace Conference of that afternoon. It was a meeting of the Big Ten together with the military chiefs of the Supreme War Council.

I was inside the Murat mansion and saw



what a nice place the President has to live in while in Paris. I had a good talk with Sheldon Chase the President's Confidential Secretary. It was more or less as a result of that that I was able to get inside the Ministry of War and into the suite of rooms where the sitting was going on. At tea time they all came out and walked around and I was in the same room with them then. I watched from a distance of about 15 feet President Wilson and Lloyd George in an earnest conversation. I saw at close range Clemenceau, through the doorway of Stephen Pichen's inner office, Pichen, Wilson, Lansing, Admiral Wymes, Foch, Weygand, Mangin, Pershing, Bliss, Lord Reading, Lloyd George, Diaz, Orlando, Count Okuma, Admiral Benson, Vance McCormick.

The afternoon before from the sidewalk I saw all these assemble and in addition saw them Balfour, the Hadjaz representatives, & House. On Friday afternoon I was absolutely the only outsider present. Probably it would be best not to write out any more details



as to the program of the afternoon. I was of course not in the room with them while they were in session. The reason I wrote the communiqué was because the stenog did not happen when the job and they were asking for someone so Steve volunteered and was appointed. A funny little thing happened which I will tell you of when I get to you.

The lovely part of all this was that I have been longing, while waiting here to just see this very group of men. I put in for the leave which had to go to the Base by 15 booked and I was not sure it would come back. It did for three days. I packed off did all I wanted to do and came back a day ahead of the end of my leave so as to be here on Sunday for service. The Lord again gave me a very lovely gift.

I did one thing. I was wanted to go

into the famous Clock Room which was  
empty with just one light burning.  
The ladies & chairs were all in order. It  
was a most impressive sight to reflect  
who momentous things had gone on and  
would yet go on. I could not help putting  
my head down on the top of the chairman's  
seat and praying that God would guide  
them thru. I hope that was not the first  
prayer that had ever been said there but  
I know now at least one has been said  
over the very table at which the destinies  
of most of mankind will, humanly speaking  
be settled.

On the side during the trip I spent a  
morning at the Bibliotheque Nationale,  
perhaps the greatest library in the world.  
saw Venus of Milo & Victory at St. Louis  
and dined at the Entente Cordiale Officers  
Club which is housed in Baron de Hirsch's  
residence. Really Friday February 7th was  
a large day for me.

Thursday was low-brow day when  
I dined at Henry's Restaurant a well



known place where the financial men  
of the Bourse come to dine and where the  
quieter sort of people come in the evening.  
Then I went to the Folies Bergere. That  
was low brow enough in all conscience.  
But I guess Brie Fox would have enjoyed  
it. The show was nice enough.

All this needs a detailed account  
which can be best done in the old arm  
chair. This trip will add a couple of  
chapters to the book of my experiences  
that will have to be told to you all  
when I get to you.

You will be interested to learn that  
our friends the Vander Vens, those poor  
refugees who lived in that little cold  
wooden house in Princeton & taught  
French for money are now seeing far  
better day. Ruf Vander Ven is one of  
King Albert's esteemed counsellors and  
lives in Paris. The day I was there he  
happened to be in Belgium where he  
was to see the Queen. We will yet be

very well repaid to call upon that  
couple someday. I wish now we had  
really consummated our plan to have  
them to dinner. Adolphe enough I was  
searching in the National Library for the  
book that stopped my work on Vandenberg's  
thesis in Princeton because the book was  
not in any university in the States. I had  
no idea my old professor was actually  
in Paris himself.

Oh, we shall have many reasons to  
come abroad frequently all our lives &c.  
We must not let all these broadening  
experiences be forgotten nor drop our  
acquaintances. I have determined that  
we must keep a record of every acquaintance  
and follow them up in some way. You can  
start now by getting an address book  
and working out your end of the game. You  
have been better at it than I always but I  
am pretty keen now myself. You just  
don't know how much I've improved by



this trip:

Larry Levensgood 1915 has a job in the Peace Commission and I told him I would take one if he could get it for me. Of course he will not be able to and I will not care. I just said yes in a light way. His work is not terribly interesting but it would perfect my French and teach me another language namely German before I was through.

There was a sad side to the trip because Gordie Sims had a list of 103 Princetonians killed and it seemed as if I knew a great many too many. <sup>Allen</sup> Talley is dead. Art Savage. Benny Bunker. Pop Cery in all probability [I don't say so if to anybody who cares particularly. Let the other fellow tell.] Gordie however reported that Pop was never located as a prisoner, a sergeant who returned said Pop was hit in the raid they made and he did not know even if they took him to a German hospital before he died. Think of Pop ending his life that way. I remember the night well and was not over 3 or 4 miles away at the time.

Jack Westcott killed too - what will dear  
Sarah do? There were more but I guess  
you never knew them. This part we will  
never forget. Talley & his roommate killed and  
Pip & his roommate dead. Tal' & Pop killed.  
Harrison & Sam Compton died.

I love you  
Stewart

P.S. Excuse sad ending to letter. I just  
ran out of dope at this point

Love  
Stewart